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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/560,260	04/26/2000	James J. Hofmann	100718-421(MIC-79)	2379

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03/13/2003

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EXAMINER

CHOWDHURY, TARIFUR RASHID

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2871

DATE MAILED: 03/13/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/560,260

Applicant(s)

HOFMANN ET AL.

Examiner

Tarifur R Chowdhury

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 February 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 69-74 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 69 and 71-74 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 70 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 26 April 2000 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 3.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Claims 1-68 and 75-77 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected claims, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in Paper #'s 6 and 8.

Specification

2. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

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5. Claims 69 and 71-74 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over by Poco et al., (Poco), USPAT 6,168,737.

6. Poco discloses and shows in Figs. 2A-2D, a method of forming spacers in a display comprising:

- forming positive mold (10) by depositing a layer on a support and patterning the layer of photoresist to define an array of posts (col. 2, lines 61);
- forming a resilient negative mold by depositing a material over the positive mold (col. 3, lines 3-5), the material conforming to the array of posts, allowing the material to cure, and separating the cured material from the positive mold, the negative mold defining an array of apertures, each of the apertures corresponding to one of the posts (col. 3, lines 19-21);
- placing a negative mold in contact with a substrate (col. 3, lines 16-18);
- filling the apertures with a spacer material (col. 3, lines 19-21);
- allowing the spacer material to cure; and
- separating the negative mold and the substrate.

Poco does not explicitly disclose that the positive mold is formed by depositing a layer of photoresist. However, using a photoresist layer to form a positive mold is common and known in the art and thus would have been obvious to avail a proven material.

Accordingly, claim 69 would have been obvious.

As to claims 71 and 72, using metallic alignment sheets having a plurality of

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apertures to align the mold with the substrate is common and known in the art and thus would have been obvious to improve alignment of the mold with respect to the substrate.

As to claim 73, Poco discloses that filling the apertures with spacer material comprises injecting the spacer material into the negative mold (col. 3, lines 15-16).

As to claim 74, Poco discloses that the negative mold comprises a plurality of vacuum pump out channels.

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claim 70 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tarifur R Chowdhury whose telephone number is (703) 308-4115. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th (6:30-5:00) Friday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, William L Sikes can be reached on (703) 305-4842. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 746-7005 for regular communications and (703) 308-7724 for After Final communications.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1782.



T. Chowdhury
Patent Examiner
Technology Center 2800

TRC
March 6, 2003